

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing Amendments and the remarks which follow.

By this amendment applicants have cancelled claims 13, 14 and 15 and added new claim 16. New claim 16 is fully supported in the as-filed specification.

The claims now pending are 1, 3-12.

The objection to claim 13 is rendered moot in view of its cancellation herein.

The rejection of claim 15 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, is rendered moot in view of its cancellation herein.

Claims 1, 3 and 6-15 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Bakken et al, US 6,875,315. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Bakken et al is unavailable as a reference under §102(e) since the subject application is entitled to the priority of the Italian application upon which it is based. The Italian application was filed on December 6, 2002 and, accordingly, antedates Bakken et al's effective date as a reference. In support, applicant submits herewith a translation of the Italian application.

In view of the foregoing, the rejection under 35 USC §102(e) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bakken et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

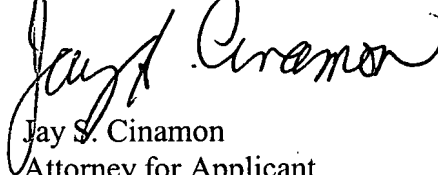
The Bakken et al reference is unavailable as the basis for a §103(a) rejection in view of the fact that the Italian priority application of the subject application was filed on December 6, 2002 and thus antedates the effective date of Bakken et al as a reference. Applicants entitlement to the

December 6, 2002 is supported by the enclosed certified translation of the Italian application.

The issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any fees which may be due to our Deposit Account No. 01-0035.

Respectfully submitted,



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